



# Family Service Guide

Volunteering Tips For Parents of Young Children



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Disney CITIZENSHIP



## Volunteer Tips

### Make sure your child enjoys their volunteer experience so they will want to do it again and again!

- Engage your child in a task they enjoy; make it fun! If they love to play games, encourage them to teach a new friend or an elder how to play. If they love being active, organize a simple pledge drive to raise funds for distance ran or biked, or number of jumps in a set period. Then, guide your child in choosing a cause to receive the funds raised. It is a good way to help them associate "winning" with "helping."
- Make sure that the site where your child will volunteer welcomes children as helpers and assigns them fun tasks that are really needed. Your child's contribution is important and should be acknowledged and respected.
- Prepare your child for the project by talking about the issue or the people you will meet. Example of a question could be: What happens when we let water run for very long?

After the project, help your child think about their experience as a volunteer. If permitted, consider taking photos of your child during the project. Photos will serve as reminders of what they did and also as starting points for great conversations about what your child thought, felt, and learned... and what you learned about your child too! Here are some ideas for conversation starters:

- What did you really like about what we did today?
- Let's start a list of how we can help others by doing what you liked best.
- You worked really hard to help others today. What are you most proud about what you did?
- When other kids see the poster you made, what do you hope they'll do at home?



There are many benefits to starting children early in volunteering: it becomes a lifetime habit, they learn new skills and concepts, and they feel connected to the community through their own actions. Above all, they discover they are important in the lives of others and that, even as children, they have the "POWER OF DOING GOOD."

Adapted from [www.YSA.org](http://www.YSA.org)



# Treasure Nature

**Be positive environmental stewards, ensuring the health of our planet for generations to come.**

How to encourage young children to *treasure nature*? Starting is easier than you think; build on what children are already doing. Children are already *treasuring nature* when they:

- Save water by turning off the water when brushing their teeth
- Turn off the lights when leaving the room, and turn off electronics when they're done using them
- Use recycled paper for art projects and schoolwork
- Bring lunch in a reusable lunch box or lunch bag
- Recycle empty plastic bottles or aluminum cans
- Enjoy nature firsthand by spending time outdoors, even camping out in the backyard
- Recognize and appreciate wildlife when camping, hiking, or visiting the zoo or aquarium

Start with what your child already enjoys doing and offer opportunities to do some of those same tasks in the community. Here are some ideas:

- Join a park, river, or beach clean-up
- Create a pond or rain garden in the backyard to provide habitat for wildlife
- Volunteer at the local zoo or nature center
- Help organize a recycling event to collect plastics with other items that might end up in streams and lakes
- Participate in a tree planting event at the local park to help ensure wildlife can survive and thrive
- Donate toys, books, and clothes to be reused and enjoyed by others
- Make posters encouraging others to treasure nature, then distribute them to family and friends



[nwf.org](http://nwf.org)

Reviewed by the Education  
and Science experts at  
Disney's Animal Kingdom®





# Animal Care & Compassion

**Caring for animals will teach kids about compassion, kindness, and service to others.**

How to encourage children to be kind and compassionate to others? Pet care provides many great opportunities to teach kids about being compassionate, kind, and servicing others. Children are learning these important lessons when they help out with pet care responsibilities, such as:

- Being kind and gentle to the pet
- Providing the pet with fresh water and a good diet
- Giving the pet shelter and a comfortable resting area
- Grooming and bathing the pet
- Keeping a collar with an ID tag on the pet
- Helping care for the pet's sickness or injury

**Don't own a pet? Start with what your child already enjoys doing and offer opportunities to do some of those same tasks for pets and animals in the community. Here are some ideas:**

- Bring blankets and toys for pets at a shelter
- Spend time at the shelter; volunteer to help clean, walk, and provide companionship to pets
- Host a pet food drive to collect much-needed pet food for animals at a shelter
- Help elderly neighbors care for their pets by assisting them with simple pet care responsibilities
- Clean up for wildlife; help implement a cleanup and recycling plan to keep habitats clean and safe for wild animals
- Encourage children to make posters that promote kindness to animals, then distribute them to family and friends
- And when it's time for a pet, consider adopting from a shelter

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# Make A Power Promise

**Small individual actions can have a large collective impact that transforms communities.**

How to raise children that care about others and their community?  
Starting is easier than you think; build on what children are already doing. They are already *volunteering* when they:

- Help you load light groceries into the car
- Make you aware if you left the house lights on
- Bake with you and set the table for meals
- Help take care of the family pet
- Assist an elderly relative with a chore
- Sort items to pack for a family trip

So start with what your child already enjoys doing and offer opportunities to do some of those same tasks for others. Here are some ideas:

- Make posters to encourage acts of kindness, then distribute them to family and friends
- Bake cookies together to sell as a fundraiser for a local charity
- Plant fruits and vegetables together to donate to a food pantry
- Visit a senior center to play games with elders and tell stories
- Shop together for toiletries and have your child sort them into bags for residents at a homeless shelter
- Urge your child to play host to a new kid in the neighborhood or at school

Already making a difference?  
Summer of Service Awards provide  
\$1,000 grants to recognize kids and  
families working with nonprofits  
in their local communities.  
Find out more by visiting  
[ysa.org/beinspired](http://ysa.org/beinspired)

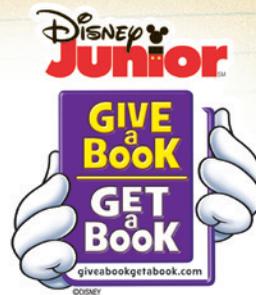
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## Give back by sharing stories and donating books.

- Disney Junior's "Give A Book, Get A Book" is a new initiative designed to inspire parents and caregivers to spend time each day sharing stories.
- Disney is partnering with First Book on this exciting new program and together, they will donate up to one million books to U.S. communities in need.
- When families purchase any of the specially-marked Disney Junior products that contain the "Give A Book, Get A Book" logo, they will receive a redemption code and can log on to the GiveaBookGetaBook.com website to choose a region in the country for First Book to donate a book. After donating the book, they will also receive a free Disney Digital Book for themselves to share as a family.



[giveabookgetabook.com](http://giveabookgetabook.com)

First Book eliminates a critical barrier for communities, classrooms and children in need: the lack of books and educational resources. A nonprofit social enterprise, First Book provides ongoing access to new, high-quality books and classroom materials for educators and program leaders serving kids in low-income communities.



Visit [firstbook.org](http://firstbook.org) to connect your child's classroom with brand-new resources or to find out how your family can help bring new books to children in need.



# Create Your Own Story



## The benefits of storytelling.

- Storytelling has always been a primal form of communication. Stories are how we are wired and how we think, and how we organize our experiences and make meaning out of life. Stories transcend generations, engage us through emotions and connect us to others. They provide a pathway to engaging our right brains and triggering our imagination.
- For preschoolers, storytelling is vital to their social, emotional, learning development, critical listening and thinking skills.
- When parents talk, sing, and read to their child, links among the child's brain cells are strengthened and new cells and links are formed which stimulate language and literacy development. Stories rely so much on words; they are a tremendous source of language experience for children because they build vocabulary.
- Storytelling is the foundation for writing because it serves to help children organize their thoughts and represents a prewriting stage of the writing process. It's also a good way to motivate even the most reluctant reader or writer.

## What classifies as storytelling for preschoolers?

Storytelling comes in many forms.

- Telling a story, whether it is a family story that has been passed down for generations or one a parent makes up; all stories are beneficial to your child.
- Asking questions to engage a child in conversation about a story whether it is a book, a TV show or family event helps them organize their thoughts and sets the foundation for prewriting skills.
- Encouraging a child to make up a story is just as important as hearing a story told by another. Children who tell stories are eager to write their stories down as they age.
- Singing nursery rhymes or other songs that are story driven is a great way to engage preschoolers and develop vocabulary.
- Reading a wide variety of books aloud to children from early infancy through age five is one important way to expose children to vocabulary.

